

Cambridge to Piarere Expressway

Factsheet

National will build the Cambridge to Piarere expressway, delivering a 16km four-lane expressway between the completed Cambridge section of the Waikato expressway and the State Highway 1 / State Highway 29 intersection.

The Cambridge to Piarere section of State Highway 1 forms part of New Zealand's most important transport corridor between Auckland-Hamilton-Tauranga which accounts for a significant proportion of all road freight in the country.

Recognising the high volumes of traffic and freight in the area and the impact that has on travel times and increasing safety risks, it is important to invest in high quality roading infrastructure to future-proof the transport links in the area and improve road safety.

This project will increase the safety of the road, support faster freight and vehicle connections between Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga, and improve access to the local community meaning we can maximise the opportunities for future growth.

Our commitment:

- National will build the Cambridge to Piarere expressway project with construction to begin in our first term of Government.

Background

- The previous National Government was advancing plans for an expressway between Cambridge and Piarere, as the logical extension of the Waikato Expressway.
- The Cambridge to Piarere section of State Highway 1 forms part of New Zealand's most important transport corridor between Auckland-Hamilton-Tauranga which accounts for a significant proportion of all road freight in the country.
- Traffic volume is high and growing. In 2017 there were approximately 19000 vehicles on the Cambridge to Piarere route per day. Following completion of the Waikato Expressway it is expected that there will be an increase in traffic volumes by up to 2000-3000 vehicles a day with 30,000 vehicles per day by 2044.
- The route is prone to safety issues with 44 unplanned road closures, all relating to crashes, occurring every year.
- There were 121 crashes between 2013-2017 with 22 deaths or serious injuries.
- Increased traffic growth will continue to increase the safety risks on this stretch of road.

Labour's Failure

- Labour's changes in 2018 to transport policy settings resulted in \$5 billion being cut from the state highway budget – meaning this important project was shelved, after more than \$4 million had been spent on business cases and planning. Consultation in 2017 showed that stakeholders and the project team favoured a four lane expressway extension.
- Under Labour, no money has been set aside for the project for the next ten years.
- The Government instead advanced plans to upgrade the SH1/SH29 intersection and introduce safety improvements along the stretch of road costing \$58 million and \$8.3 million respectively but this will not address the underlying problem.
- An upgrade for this high-volume and high risk area is still required as the area continues to grow.

Detail

- National will adopt the 2018 Re-evaluation design specifications.
- The Cambridge to Piarere Expressway Extension will be a 16km four lane expressway between the completed Cambridge section of the Waikato Expressway (SH1) and the State Highway 1 and Stage Highway 29 intersection.
- The design will utilise parts of the existing corridor from the end of the Waikato Expressway to Karapiro Rd and will incorporate parallel roads on both sides of the highway to provide connections to local roads and access.
- We will build a new grade separated interchange near Karapiro Road to provide access across the highway for the adjacent community.
- A new section of expressway will be built east of Karapiro Road, north of the existing State Highway 1 route.
- A two lane rural roundabout is provided where the alignment re-joins SH1 and SH29 to create an interchange with the existing roading infrastructure.
- This will integrate in the connection to the upgrade of the SH1/SH29 intersection that is planned for completion by 2024.

Project benefits

- A four lane highway in this area will triple the capacity on this route.
- It will improve resilience in the roading of the area and support safer and faster freight and connections between Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga.
- Travel time savings are estimated at up to 3 and half minutes.

- It will enhance journey time predictability by reducing the number of road closures by up to 90 per cent for safety related closures.
- The project will improve access to local community features and maximise the opportunity for future growth in the community and increased local tourism.
- The number of deaths and serious injury crashes on the Cambridge to Piarere corridor is expected to reduce by more than 70 per cent through the improvements.

Project costs

- The project is estimated to cost \$570 million.